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EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER

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State Dept. review completedRomania Takes the Initiative in Helsinki

The Romanian delegation to the multilateral preparatory talks (MPT) in Helsinki wasted little time in lobbying for the recognition of all participants as independent equals--regardless of their adherence or non-adherence to military blocs. Bucharest's delegation of twelve, one of the largest on hand, was the first to pass around a proposed text for MPT rules of procedure as well as to argue vigorously for the rotation of the vice-chairmanship (with an apparent eye on setting a precedent for the CSCE itself).

The Romanians appear to be staking a great deal on being able to convince the US of the correctness of their views. The US delegation reports a conscious effort to harmonize Bucharest's position on procedural arrangements with those of the US. Moreover, in line with Bucharest's effort to establish itself clearly as an equal participant, independent of the Soviets, Romanian delegation officer Neagu made a specific appeal to his US counterpart that no "NATO drafts" on MPT be tabled. Neagu argued that such a move would put his delegation under pressure to support the common position of the Warsaw Pact. Taking this argument one step further, Neagu opined that if NATO's December ministerial communique avoided polemics on CSCE it would "be of considerable help to Bucharest in declining to sign a Warsaw Pact reply."

Neagu did not hesitate to reiterate Romania's fear of Soviet intentions toward Eastern Europe. In fact, Romania's success in goading the Soviet delegation into "sharp intervention" on the subject of Romanian independence, may be designed to impress those in attendance of the legitimacy of their fears of the Kremlin.

Romania's next initiative in Helsinki may be to press for some sort of measure calling for sanctions against any state violating future CSCE declaration of principles governing relations between states. Bucharest's DCM in Paris confirms that such a proposal is being given "serious thought."

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Prague Indignant Over French Socialist Conference on Czechoslovakia

Prague is howling with indignation over a "Conference on Czechoslovakia and Problems of Socialist Democracy" conducted by the French Socialist Party on 25-26 November.

Presided over by Party leader Francois Mitterand, the conference discussed the capacity of East European Communist governments to permit personal freedom, to decentralize their economies, and to broaden their range of national independence. On all counts, Prague's record is deplorable. Even more painful, to the Czechoslovak regime, however, was the fact that the French Socialists had the gall to invite Alexander Dubcek and other "Prague Spring" leaders, who have since become non-entities, to take part in the discussion. At last report, Dubcek was the chief of the motor pool for the Regional Department of Waters and Forests in Bratislava.

The present regime would rather keep these skeletons of the not-too-distant past safely buried to avoid any sort of popular demonstration in their support. On the other hand, the revival of these ghosts possibly plays into the hands of the extreme conservative faction that demands a harder line against the participants of the 1968 liberalization. Both Communist Party leader Gustav Husak and powerful Party Secretary Visil Bilak have alluded to the existence of such a faction in recent speeches. Husak's position would be greatly weakened by the trial of the "Prague Spring" liberals because his role in the 1968 movement was far from ideologically pure.

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Bosnian Party Leaders Rap Yugoslav Liberals

The head of the Bosnia-Hercegovina party Branko Mikulic and Todo Kurtovic, a republic party representative on the LCY presidium, have made slashing attacks on liberals in the LCY. The republic party has been one of the most vociferous voices in advocating tougher policies and its current attack may be read as an attempt to nail down the coffin on liberals in other republic regimes who have been weakened by the purge of their leaders.

Kurtovic's broadside was the most intemperate. He accused liberals of creating a "supra-class democracy" which allows openings to enemies of self-management, of serving as a mouth-piece for these hostile forces in the party, and of deemphasizing the socialist character of the economy by glorifying the market aspects. He said that the liberals introduce "bourgeois

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parliamentarianism" into state affairs, hamstringing the will of the working class by setting up a "democratic terror of their minority" and pursue a revision of non-alignment, presumably in favor the West. Kurtovic said that liberal machination had even been felt in the republic and cited an attempt to revive the "young Bosnian" movement, which was the revolutionary core of opposition to Hapsburg rule before the first world war.

Mikulic blamed liberals for creating the muddled ideological situation in the LCY, flirting with all kinds of enemies of the system while posing as friends of the people, and of trying to form an elite within the regime.

Tito has shown special regard for the vigilance of the party in Sarajevo and it is very likely that he agrees with the thrust of these attacks. He may not, however, like the timing of the sharp denunciations which conflict with a general attempt to consolidate the situation and downplay factionalism. Party leaders in the army have taken a similar hard line view in the recent past and the accumulation of such statements suggests that Tito's firmest supporters may be trying to edge him toward a more uncompromising stance.

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